

My name is Beth Kerrigan, Deputy Mayor West Hartford and I stand here, or sit as the case may be in support of HB 15 An Act Concerning Fair and Equal Pay and HB 5386 Act Concerning Various Pay Equity and Fairness Measures.

With yesterday's storm I had some time to go rummaging through boxes in my attic to look for a copy of the discrimination case I had filed in the 80's against a company owned by Mobil for pay discrimination based on gender. I wasn't able to put my hand on it but I did find a lot of other good stuff, old letters, along with a 1972 conciliation agreement for a suit I filed against Islip Speedway for not letting me race motocross because I am a female.

It was pretty black and white case. Slam dunk. Simple discrimination. Just like this is. One set of rules for males another for females. We need you, who are in power to right a wrong. Because it will feels good to do the right thing. We shouldn't have to always rely on the courts to enforce the constitution.

As a young woman out of college I was hired by Container Corporation. A manufacturing plant owned by Mobil. I was their first and only female in production, affirmative action in action.

So I'm out having a beer with one of the guys that was hired along with me. We started talking about our future as General Managers, how much money we would make which naturally lead to a conversation about salary. Our conversation quickly turned a fun night out into a bummer. I didn't know what I didn't know. But I knew this. Same degree, same college, same job, different salary was wrong.

I eventually chose to leave manufacturing for sales. I was being interviewed by GAF for those of you who are old enough to remember the film that made it to the moon. A male friend of mine coached me, ask for \$40k, a company car, paid expenses. It sounded crazy to me, \$40K I wasn't worth \$40k. I gulped, scared as I was took his advice, got the job, and more than doubled my income.

Discrimination exists. It's always existed. This two worlds between the genders.

What was OK when I was in grade school and told I couldn't deliver our local Newsday paper because "it's was a boys job and you are a girl" was never OK. It was just accepted as OK. Inequality made right as seen in the rearview mirror is seen for what it is unconstitutional discrimination.

Let's not always rely on the courts to bring justice and equality for all. You have a super power for good.

Thank you. and just as I trusted my friend and took a leap for good I trust you will do the right thing.

